



*Magic*



1. Let Me Be There 2:59
2. If You Love Me (Let Me Know) 3:12
3. I Honestly Love You 3:37
4. Have You Never Been Mellow 3:30
5. Please Mr. Please 3:23
6. Come On Over 3:41
7. Don't Stop Believin' 3:36
8. Sam 3:43
9. You're The One That I Want – with John Travolta 2:50
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- BONUS TRACK** 21. The Grease Megamix – with John Travolta 4:50

## UTVRECORDS™

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The Very Best of Olivia Newton-John



# Olivia Magic Newton-John

Webster's Dictionary defines magic as the use of charms to govern certain natural or supernatural forces, something mysterious and inexplicable with extraordinary power or influence. It could have been defined by the name Olivia Newton-John, for while most celebrities possess charisma and hopefully talent, few have the kind of magic that casts a spell over everything they touch and everyone they come in contact with. Rarely has someone come along who has captivated both film and concert audiences of all ages for such an expansive period of time as Newton-John.

In the decade from 1973-1983, Newton-John did it all—she topped the country charts, the pop charts, the adult contemporary charts, won Country Music Association Awards, Grammys™, American Music Awards, People's Choice Awards, and became an international movie star with her debut as Sandy in *Grease*—the most successful musical film ever made—catapulting her to eternal teen icon status as the movie continues to please audiences.

"That decade was the catalyst of my career," Newton-John says. "I moved to America and had incredible success with country music originally, and then had the fortune of getting the part in *Grease*, which took me to another level again, and after that, 'Physical' was an added bonus," she says, referring to the three chapters of her career.

*Magic: The Very Best Of Olivia Newton-John* chronicles those eventful periods and will transport you back in time to the moment you first heard them—the true marking of a great song—as you get lost in the memories and Newton-John's magical presentation.

Newton-John was one of those young girls destined to perform, despite the fact that she came from an amazing line of scholars, including her maternal grandfather, Max Born, whose contributions to the field of physics and work on the theory of relativity earned him the Nobel Prize in physics in 1954. Born in Cambridge, England, she was the youngest of three children, with a love of animals that almost dedicated her to the field of veterinary medicine. She began singing in Melbourne, Australia, where the family moved when she was five, after her father accepted a position as dean at Ormond College.

At 12, she made her stage debut in a local production of *Green Pastures*, and at 14 she formed a group called The Sol Four with three other girlfriends. She became so wrapped up in the group that her parents forced her to disband it when it interfered with her schoolwork. Not to be deterred, she entered and won her first talent contest at 15, performing the song "Everything's Coming Up Roses." She was awarded a trip to England, although she chose to postpone it for a couple of years while gaining some more experience as Lovely Livvy, hostess for a children's television show called *The Tarax Happy Show*. The following year, she worked on a show called *The Go Show*, where the guitar player in the back-up band was going to end up playing a profound role in her life. His name was John Farrar, and he would eventually produce and write a good portion of her hits, including "Have You Never Been Mellow," "Don't Stop Believin'," "You're The One That I Want," "Hopelessly Devoted To You" and "Suddenly," all included in this collection.

At 17, Newton-John took the trip to England with her mother, resulting in a brief record deal with Decca and eventual work with Pat Carroll, with whom she had worked on *The Go Show* in Australia. They remained there a couple of years, then returned to Australia, although Newton-John stayed only briefly.

Back in England, she began to keep company with Bruce Welch, a member of the famed group, The Shadows, who in turn introduced her to their manager, who also represented Cliff Richard. All of these people and their associates would end up factoring in Newton-John's career. For instance, John Rostill also was a Shadows member whose compositions "Let Me Be There," "If You Love Me (Let Me Know)" and "Please Mr. Please" would be among her hits a few years later.

"John Rostill died before he had the opportunity to see their success, which is a real tragedy," Newton-John laments of the bassist. "They were great songs and I still enjoy singing them. I first heard 'Let Me Be There' when Bruce Welch played it for me, and I knew, immediately, it was a catchy song. It was his idea of putting a bass voice on it in the chorus which gave it a very different sound," Newton-John says of the infamous low part performed by well-known British vocalist Mike Sammes. "I loved the whole sentiment of 'Please Mr. Please' and thought it was such a clever idea. Everyone can relate to hearing a song on the radio or juke box and having it take you back to that place you don't want to go."

These were among the country hits Newton-John made her stateside splash with in the early '70s. "It was Helen Reddy [of 'I Am Woman' fame] who encouraged me to move to America because I'd had one hit record in England and she said, 'If you want to have success in America, you've really got to be available there.'"

Reddy recalls making that remark at her Los Angeles "Delta Dawn" and "Leave Me Alone (Ruby Red Dress)" recording session for which Newton-John was present. "She already had hits in England and happened to be visiting L.A.," Reddy says. "She was in the control booth in the studio that day."

It was actually at Reddy's home, some time later, that Newton-John met Allan Carr, who, along with Robert Stigwood, ended up producing *Grease*. "It was a small dinner party for eight," Reddy says. "Allan was casting *Grease* and I remember he looked at me and said, 'Too young for a teacher, too old for a student,' and turning to Olivia he said, 'But she'd be perfect.'"

Perfect indeed. Her innocent, yet alluring looks and established success as a singer, made her the ideal candidate to star opposite John Travolta, who was coming off the mega-success of *Saturday Night Fever*. The movie's three huge hits, "You're The One That I Want," "Hopelessly Devoted To You" and "Summer Nights" also are included on this CD, all of which evoke special memories in Newton-John.

While "Summer Nights" was from the original theatrical production of *Grease*, Newton-John recalls the recording was a lot of fun because both gangs of girls and boys were in the studio together.

"John Farrar wrote 'You're The One that I Want' at the last minute when they decided they wanted to add some songs into the movie. He wrote it the night before it was due and came to my trailer early in the morning, having been up all night mixing it. I knew the minute it started that it was a hit. We recorded it a few days later—John [Travolta] and I were in the studio at the same time, although we recorded our pieces separately, which is how it is usually done. 'Hopelessly Devoted To You' was added for my character and shot for the movie after it had wrapped," says Newton-John. "It was a few days after our wrap party, so it was just a skeleton crew on set, with a plastic swimming pool and the porch. It made me feel sad that no one was there, so it really helped the mood of the song. When I look at it now, it reminds me a little of Debbie Reynolds' *Tammy* because of the way it was shot and I look a little like her. I still love singing that song." The film seems to find its way to each new generation, so to the masses, Newton-John is still—and will always be—"Sandy."

Today, she laughs modestly at that thought, recalling, "When we went to the 20th anniversary of *Grease* (in 1998), John Travolta said to me, 'This is okay now, but in 20 years it's going to be a little strange!'"

Amazingly enough, despite the unshakeable identification with that character, Newton-John was able to snag other roles in such films as *Xanadu* and *Two of a Kind*, both of which were not huge box office successes, but spawned some wonderful music.

Part of the *Xanadu* soundtrack was written and produced by the Electric Light Orchestra and Jeff Lynne, including the title track. The other half of the music was written and produced by her long-time associate John Farrar, including "Magic" and "Suddenly."

"I think 'Suddenly' is my favorite duet that I sing," says Newton-John of the vocal collaboration between her and Cliff Richard. "Cliff has been a mentor of mine who had me on his television show in England when I was a young girl. He helped launch my career, so I've always had a great admiration and love for him. He's a wonderful performer and singer and I was so lucky that he agreed to sing this with me."

And just when it looked as though Newton-John couldn't go any further, she surpassed her previous successes with "Physical," which stayed in the No.1 slot for ten weeks during the fall and winter of 1981-82. The song was written by fellow Australian Steve Kipner, who also wrote her hit "Heart Attack," (and had a hand in such smashes as Player's "Baby Come Back" and the very recent "Genie In A Bottle" by Christina Aguilera). "Physical" presented Newton-John in an entirely new image, one she was not initially completely comfortable with.

"I was so lucky to find that song," the singer says. "Really, how do you follow something like 'Grease?' That song gave me somewhere else to go. When I first heard it, I knew it was a hit, but after I recorded it, I had a heart attack, thinking, 'Oh my God, if this comes out, my fans will hate me. Everyone will hate me. It's too raunchy.' I called my manager and said, 'You've got to pull this record, I can't do it. It's too over the top and I'm too nervous about it.' He said, 'It's too late, it's coming out in three weeks.' I said, 'Then we've got to do something to temper it. I think we should do an exercise video or something to play on the physical side of it and make it a little funny to soften it up,'" she recalls. "And even though the video was to keep me on the side of safety, it ended up being pretty bold because at the end of the piece, two guys go walking off together."

Newton-John was becoming bolder, especially in her vocal style. You can't help but notice that at the beginning of *Magic: The Very Best Of Olivia Newton-John*, the artist who sings 1973's "Let Me Be There" in her sweet demure manner, is not the same artist who gives us the strong and fearless performance on 1983's "Twist Of Fate." There is a maturation in her choice of material, her voice and presentation, which she took into the '90s beyond the tracks on this collection.



Being a mother, a cancer survivor and an active environmentalist (she and best friends Nancy and Jim Chuda formed CHEC—Children's Health Environmental Coalition—to educate parents on how to protect their children from toxins in their environment) has a great deal to do with the woman she is today.

"Every day I thank God and the universe for being here and being alive, and for the bounty of everything that I have. Having cancer absolutely put things in perspective. My career has been a wonderful blessing, but it's not who I *am*, it's what I *do*. The things that matter are family, friends and health. I've enjoyed incredible success and I feel very, very blessed," she says softly.

"I thought I had done everything with *Grease*, and then to have the success with 'Physical' was amazing. The songs on this album represent the most exciting period of my life, recording-wise, in that I went from my very beginnings into my biggest successes."

With one common thread—magic. Always magic.



1. Let Me Be There

(John Rostill)

Pop #6 / charted 11-17-73

Adult Contemporary #3 / charted 9-8-73

From the MCA album *Let Me Be There* (1973)

© 1973 Festival Records International Ltd.

2. If You Love Me (Let Me Know)

(John Rostill)

Pop #5 / charted 4-13-74

Adult Contemporary #2 / charted 4-13-74

From the MCA album *If You Love Me, Let Me Know* (1974)

© 1974 Festival Records International Ltd.

3. I Honestly Love You

(Peter Allen – Jeff Barry)

Pop #1 / charted 8-17-74

Adult Contemporary #1 / charted 8-3-74

From the MCA album *If You Love Me, Let Me Know* (1974)

© 1974 Festival Records International Ltd.

4. Have You Never Been Mellow

(John Farrar)

Pop #1 / charted 1-25-75

Adult Contemporary #1 / charted 2-1-75

From the MCA album *Have You Never Been Mellow* (1975)

© 1975 EMI Records Ltd., Under license from EMI-Capitol Special Markets

5. Please Mr. Please

(Bruce Welch – John Rostill)

Pop #3 / charted 6-7-75

Adult Contemporary #1 / charted 6-7-75

From the MCA album *Have You Never Been Mellow* (1975)

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6. Come On Over

(Barry Gibb – Robin Gibb)

Pop #23 / charted 3-13-76

Adult Contemporary #1 / charted 3-13-76

From the MCA album *Come On Over* (1976)

© 1976 MCA Records



7. **Don't Stop Believin'**

(John Farrar)

Pop #33 / charted 8-7-76

Adult Contemporary #1 / charted 8-7-76

From the MCA album *Don't Stop Believin'* (1976)

© 1976 MCA Records

8. **Sam**

(John Farrar – Hank Marvin – Don Black)

Pop #20 / 1-29-77

Adult Contemporary #1 / 1-29-77

From the MCA album *Don't Stop Believin'* (1976)

© 1976 MCA Records

9. **You're The One That I Want – with John Travolta**

(John Farrar)

Pop #1 / charted 4-1-78

Adult Contemporary #23 / charted 4-22-78

From the RSO album *Grease* (1978)

© 1978 Polydor Ltd. (U.K.)



10. **Hopelessly Devoted To You**

(John Farrar)

Pop #3 / charted 7-8-78

Adult Contemporary #7 / charted 7-15-78

From the RSO album *Grease* (1978)

© 1978 Polydor Ltd. (U.K.)

11. **Summer Nights – with John Travolta**

(Jim Jacobs – Warren Casey)

Pop #5 / charted 8-5-78

Adult Contemporary #21 / charted 8-12-78

From the RSO soundtrack album *Grease* (1978)

© 1978 Polydor Ltd. (U.K.)

12. **A Little More Love**

(John Farrar)

Pop #3 / charted 11-25-78

Adult Contemporary #4 / charted 12-2-78

From the MCA album *Totally Hot* (1978)

© 1978 MCA Records





13. **Deeper Than The Night**

(Tom Snow – Johnny Vastano)

Pop #11 / charted 4-14-79

Adult Contemporary #4 / charted 4-28-79

From the MCA album *Totally Hot* (1978)

© 1978 MCA Records

14. **Magic**

(John Farrar)

Pop #1 / charted 5-24-80

Adult Contemporary #1 / charted 5-31-80

From the MCA soundtrack album *Xanadu* (1980)

© 1980 MCA Records

15. **Xanadu – with Electric Light Orchestra**

(Jeff Lynne)

Pop #8 / charted 8-9-80

Adult Contemporary #2 / charted 8-23-80

From the MCA soundtrack album *Xanadu* (1980)

© 1980 MCA Records

16. **Suddenly – with Cliff Richard**

(John Farrar)

Pop #20 / charted 10-25-80

Adult Contemporary #4 / charted 10-25-80

From the MCA soundtrack album *Xanadu* (1980)

© 1980 MCA Records





17. **Physical**  
(Stephen Kipner – Terry Shaddick)  
Pop #1 / charted 10-3-81  
Adult Contemporary #29 / charted 10-31-81  
From the MCA album *Physical* (1981)  
© 1981 MCA Records

18. **Make A Move On Me**  
(John Farrar – Tom Snow)  
Pop #5 / charted 2-13-82  
Adult Contemporary #6 / charted 2-20-82  
From the MCA album *Physical* (1981)  
© 1981 MCA Records

19. **Heart Attack**  
(Stephen Kipner – Paul Bliss)  
Pop #3 / charted 9-4-82  
From the MCA album *Olivia's Greatest Hits Vol. 2* (1982)  
© 1982 MCA Records

20. **Twist Of Fate**  
(Stephen Kipner – Peter Beckett)  
Pop #5 / charted 11-5-83  
From the MCA soundtrack album *Two Of A Kind* (1983)  
© 1983 MCA Records

#### BONUS TRACK

21. **The Grease Megamix – with John Travolta**  
*You're The One That I Want* (John Farrar)  
*Greased Lightning* (Jim Jacobs – Warren Casey)  
*Summer Nights* (Jim Jacobs – Warren Casey)  
© 1990 Polydor Ltd. (U.K.)

All Tracks Produced by John Farrar except  
"Xanadu" Produced by Jeff Lynne and "Twist Of Fate" Produced by Stephen Kipner

Compilation Produced by Mike Ragogna  
Mastered by Gavin Lurssen @ The Mastering Lab – Hollywood, CA

Production Coordination by Ute Friesleben

Editorial Assistance by Barry Korkin  
Liner Notes by Robyn Flans  
Licensing by Kelly Martinez

Art Direction by Gabrielle Raumberger  
Design by Samantha Ahdoot  
Photo Research by Morley Sobo

Olivia Newton-John thanks:

I would like to thank everyone who has been part of making my music over the last 30 years!! This CD isn't big enough to name you all, but you are in my thoughts and in my songs!!!

Love and light – Olivia

UTV thanks:

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